

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

The drawings stand objected to because the numerals "17" did not appear. In response, Applicants have deleted that numeral from the specification rendering the drawing objection moot. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the outstanding drawing objection be withdrawn.

The specification stands objected to because of a numerical error noted in the Office Action. In response, Applicants have amended the specification as per the Examiner's helpful suggestion. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the outstanding objection to the specification be withdrawn.

Applicants have amended the specification to make it clear that nuts and bolts can be thought of as threaded fasteners, so that the new claim language finds verbatim antecedent basis in the specification. No new matter has been added by this amending change.

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) over Arnold. Applicant respectfully disagrees and asserts that the claims were never intended to be misread onto the cumbersome swiveling bracket of the type shown in Arnold. In order to prevent the claims from being misinterpreted to read upon the Arnold system, Applicant has amended claims 1-6 to make it clear that the pads have a fixed orientation with respect to the bucket in both the first and second configurations. Claims 7-10 have been amended to make it clear that the pads have a fixed orientation and positioning with respect to the bottom of the bucket. Finally, claims 11-12 have been amended to make it clear that the steel plate is at a fixed acute angle with respect to the stabilizer side of the pad accessory, and the wear pad is removeably attached to the stabilizer side with at least one threaded fastener. There should be no dispute that Arnold fails to recognize Applicant's insight, in that there exists a narrow range of attachment positioning that can accomplish a stabilizing strategy without the need for cumbersome swiveling apparatuses that require the pads to be moved to a stowed location when the machine is being operated in a loader mode. This insight is innovative and deserving of patent protection. Therefore,

Applicant respectfully requests that all of the outstanding rejections based upon Arnold be withdrawn.

Claim 2 should be allowable over and above the reasons set forth with regard to claim 1 since it explicitly requires means for readily attaching and detaching the wear pads to and from the bucket, as per the helpful wording suggestion contained in the office action. Arnold does not appear to show or suggest any such feature that allows for quick serviceability of its system. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the outstanding rejection against claim 2 be withdrawn over and above the reasons set forth with regard to claim 1. The rejections against claims 4, 8, 9, 10 and 12 should likewise be withdrawn over and above the reasons set forth with regard to their respective base claims based upon similar reasoning.

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) over Confoey in view of Lakin et al. Again, Applicants respectfully disagree since the claims were never intended to be misread onto a padded excavator bucket of a backhoe loader. In an effort to better prevent the claims from being further misinterpreted in this manner, Applicant has amended claims 1-6 to make it clear that the arm and bucket are located opposite to a backhoe end of the backhoe loader. Claims 7-10 have been amended to make it clear that they pertain to a loader bucket for a backhoe loader. Since even when combined, the two cited references can not meet all the limitations of amended claims 1-10, Applicant respectfully requests that the outstanding §103 rejections be withdrawn.

This application is believed to be in condition for allowance of claims 1-12. However, if the Examiner believes that some minor additional clarification would put this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (812) 333-5355 in order to hasten the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MB McNeil', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael B. McNeil